

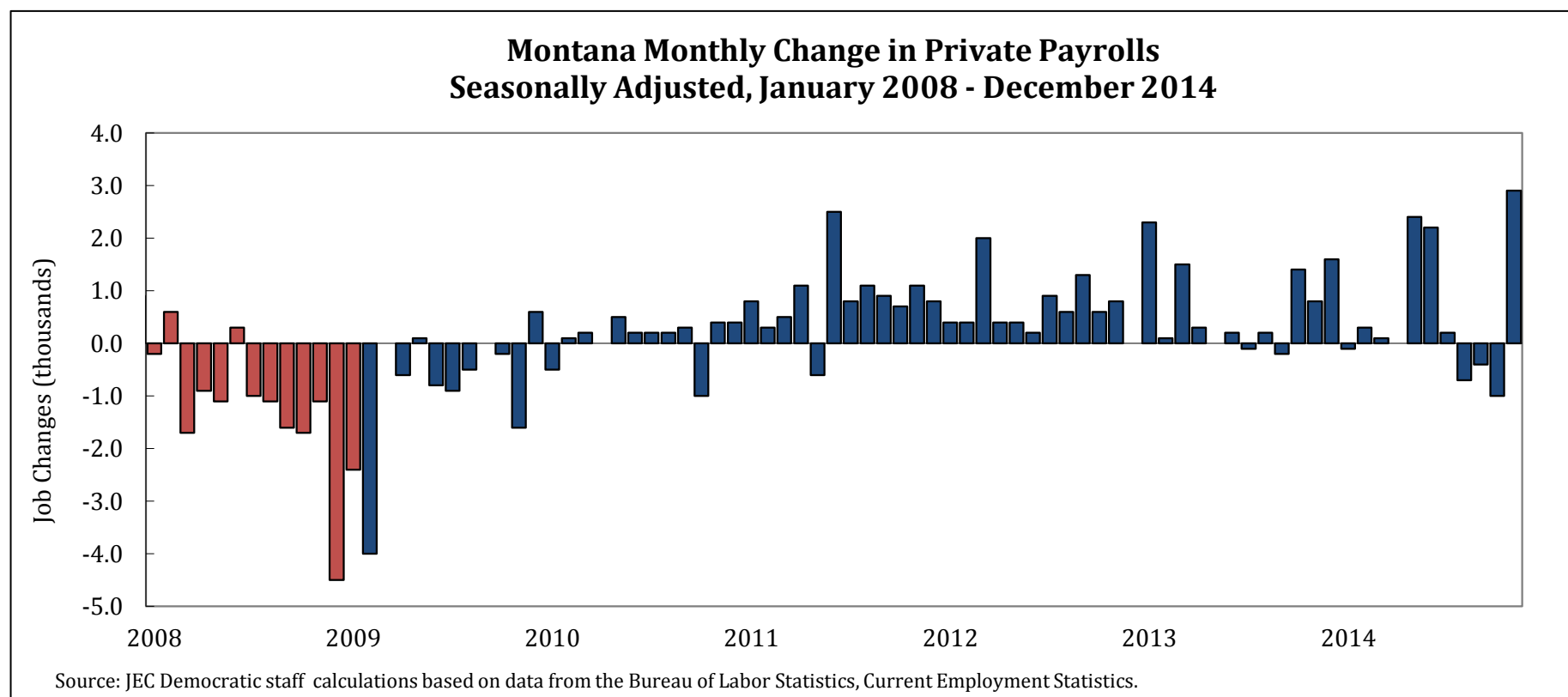


ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT: MONTANA

Includes Bureau of Labor Statistics jobs and unemployment data through December 2014

JOBS

- In December, private-sector employment in Montana grew by 2,900 jobs. Over the past year, the Montana private sector has added 7,500 jobs. This compares with an increase of 6,500 jobs over the 12 months ending in December 2013.
- Montana private-sector employers have added 33,500 jobs (an increase of 10.0 percent) since February 2010, the national low point for private-sector employment.
- In Montana, the following sectors have posted the largest job gains since February 2010: education and health services (7,500 jobs), trade, transportation and utilities (6,700 jobs) and leisure and hospitality (4,900 jobs).
- The Montana sectors with the greatest job gains in percentage terms since February 2010 are: mining and logging (36.1 percent), manufacturing (15.6 percent) and construction (13.8 percent).



UNEMPLOYMENT

- The unemployment rate in Montana was 4.2 percent in December 2014, down 0.1 percentage point from November. The rate is down 1.2 percentage points from one year earlier and is below its recent peak of 6.8 percent in November 2010.
- 21,900 Montana residents were unemployed during December 2014, down from a recent high of 33,700 in October 2010. There are still 3,100 more people unemployed in Montana than when the recession began.
- In Montana, initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits totaled 4,748 during December, down 24.6 percent from the previous month. Total initial claims over the past 12 months are down 11.0 percent from their level over the 12 months before that.

EXPORTS

- In Montana, exports totaled \$118 million in November and \$1.5 billion over the past year, down 0.4 percent from the 12 months ending in November 2013 (inflation-adjusted dollars).
- Montana exports over the past 12 months are down 0.1 percent from their level in the same 12-month period four years earlier (inflation-adjusted dollars).

HOUSING

- Home prices in Montana increased by 4.9 percent from the third quarter of 2013 to the third quarter of 2014 (the most recent quarter for which data are available). They are up 12.4 percent since their recent low in the first quarter of 2011 and are now 1.4 percent above their pre-housing-crash peak.
- Housing starts in Montana totaled 3,020 units (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in November 2014, a decrease of 18.2 percent from October.
- Within the West census region, which includes Montana, sales of new single-family homes totaled 131,000 units (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in December 2014, an increase of 3.1 percent from November. Sales of existing single-family homes increased by 12.5 percent to 990,000 units (at seasonally adjusted annual rates) from November to December 2014.

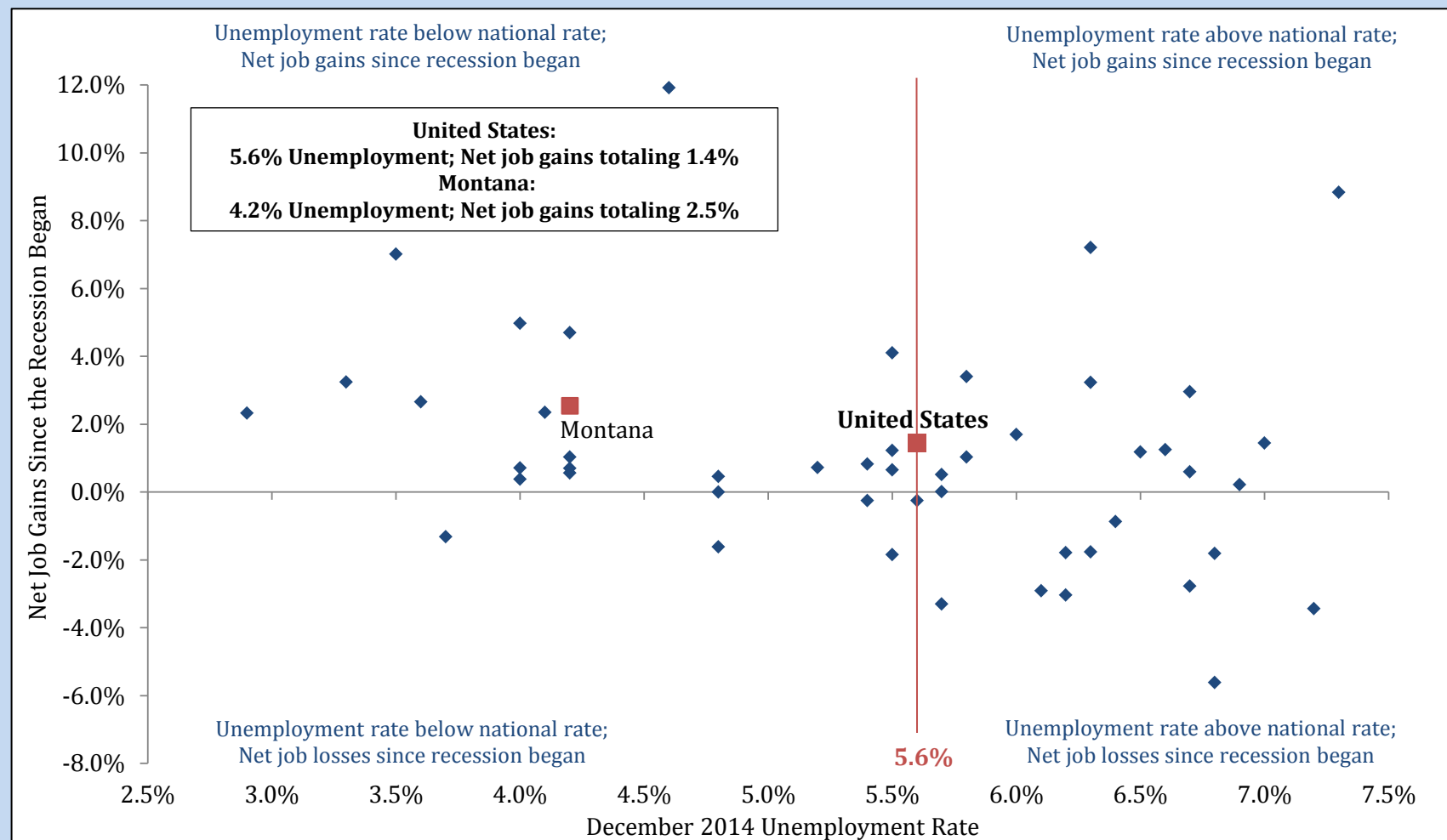
* For Montana-specific labor sector statistics, please refer to the Montana office:
<http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=190>

How Does Montana Compare to Other States?

Workers across the country were hit hard during the recent recession. Since then, employment in some states has returned to pre-recession levels, while employment in other states remains below pre-recession levels. The chart below allows for a comparison of Montana to other states using two metrics.

The unemployment rate (measured along the horizontal axis) serves as a gauge of current labor-market conditions in Montana, while net job gains since the recession began (current nonfarm jobs as a share of jobs prior to the recession) measures progress toward labor-market recovery (vertical axis).

States falling in the upper left quadrant have net job gains since the start of the recession and unemployment rates lower than the national unemployment rate. States falling in the lower right quadrant have higher unemployment rates than the United States overall and are still experiencing net job losses relative to pre-recession levels.



Note: The figure above excludes North Dakota, which has a current unemployment rate of 2.8% and net job gains totaling 31.5% since the start of the recession.

STATE QUICK FACTS

		Montana	United States
Unemployment Rate	December 2014	4.2%	5.6%
	December 2013	5.4%	6.7%
	December 2012	5.8%	7.9%
	December 2011	6.2%	8.5%
Percent of Population Who Are Veterans	2013	13.4%	9.0%
All Veterans' Unemployment Rate	2013	6.4%	6.6%
Post-9/11 Veterans' Unemployment Rate	2013	12.3%	9.0%
Median Household Income (2013 \$)	2013	\$ 44,132	\$ 51,939
	(CPS Annual Social and Economic Supplement) 2007	\$ 49,046	\$ 56,436
Poverty Rate	2013	14.5%	14.5%
	(CPS Annual Social and Economic Supplement) 2007	13.0%	12.5%
Percentage Without Health Insurance	2013	16.5%	14.5%
(American Community Survey)			